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ABSTRACT

This chapter briefly describes a model for comprehensive guidance programs developed originally by Gysbers and Moore (1974, 1981) and later refined and updated by Gysbers and Henderson (2000). It is presented here as an example of a current and widely used student-centered program in the schools that is specifically designed to facilitate students personal, career, and academic development with strong support from and in collaboration with parents, teachers, administrators, and community members, including personnel in the business and labor communities. The model contains three major elements: content, organizational framework, and resources. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the importance of staying the course with such a guidance program structure in order to achieve successful student outcomes. (Contains 10 references.) (GCP)

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By

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Chapter Ten

Comprehensive School Guidance Programs in the Future: Staying the Course

Norman C. Gysbers

At the beginning of the twentieth century, guidance in the schools emerged in response to the dramatic changes that had occurred in the industrial, occupational, educational, and social structures and institutions of that time. It was called *vocational guidance* and was loosely organized around a position titled *vocational counselor.* Most often the position was filled by teachers who were given lists of tasks to do with little or no released time from their teaching duties in which to do them (Ginn, 1924).

In the 1920s and 1930s, in response to the lack of an organized approach to guidance, the service model of guidance become popular as a way to guide the work of individuals who held the position of school counselor. Various services were identified as necessary, including individual inventory service, information service, counseling service, placement service, and follow-up service (Smith, 1951). By this time, too, the traditional way of describing guidance as having three aspects—vocational, educational, and personal-social—had emerged. Vocational guidance, instead of being guidance, had become one part of guidance (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000).

From the 1920s to the 1980s, the position orientation to guidance dominated professional training and practice in our schools. The focus was on the position of school counselor, not on the program of guidance. Administratively, the position of school counselor was included in pupil personnel services (today often called student services), along with such other positions as attendance worker; social worker; school psychologist; and speech and hearing, nursing, and medical personnel (Eckerson & Smith, 1996).

Because of the position orientation of school counselors, guidance in the schools during this time was often seen as an ancillary support service in the eyes of many people. Unfortunately, this view of guidance placed school counselors mainly in remedial-reactive roles—roles not seen as mainstream in education. What was worse, the position orientation reinforced the practice of school counselors performing many administrative, clerical, and fill-in duties because these duties could be defended as being of service to somebody.

As a result of its position orientation, guidance in the schools became known as the add-on profession. School counselors were seen as the "you-might-as-well" group ("While you are doing this task, you might as well do this one, too"). Because of the absence of an organizational structure and an institutional district policy for guidance, it was easy to assign new duties to school counselors. After all, they had flexible schedules and, because time was not a consideration, there was no need to worry about removing old duties when adding new ones. The list of tasks to be done by school counselors simply became longer. The lack of an organizational structure and an institutional district policy for guidance in the schools left guidance undefined. As a result, guidance in the schools became fragmented. It was neither comprehensive nor cumulative.

Beginning in the 1960s, but particularly in the 1970s, the concept of guidance as a developmental program emerged. During this period, the call came to reorient guidance from what had become an ancillary set of services delivered by a person in a position (the school counselor) to a comprehensive developmental program. The call for reorientation came from diverse sources, including a renewed interest in vocational-career guidance (and its theoretical base, career development), a renewed interest in developmental guidance, concern about the efficacy of the prevailing position approach to guidance in the school, and concern about accountability and evaluation.

The work of putting comprehensive guidance programs into place in the schools continued in the 1990s. Increasingly, comprehensive programs were being implemented in the schools, and as we neared the close of the 1990s, comprehensive guidance programs were rapidly replacing the position orientation to guidance. Comprehensive guidance programs are becoming the major way of organizing and managing guidance in schools across the country.

A Model for Comprehensive Guidance Programs

This chapter briefly describes a model for comprehensive guidance programs developed originally by Gysbers and Moore (1974, 1981) and later refined and updated by Gysbers and Henderson (2000). It is presented here as an example of a current and widely used student-centered program in the schools that is specifically designed to facilitate students' personal, career, and academic development with strong support from and in collaboration with parents, teachers, administrators, and community members, including personnel in the business and labor communities. The model contains three major elements: content, organizational framework, and resources. Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the model.

Content

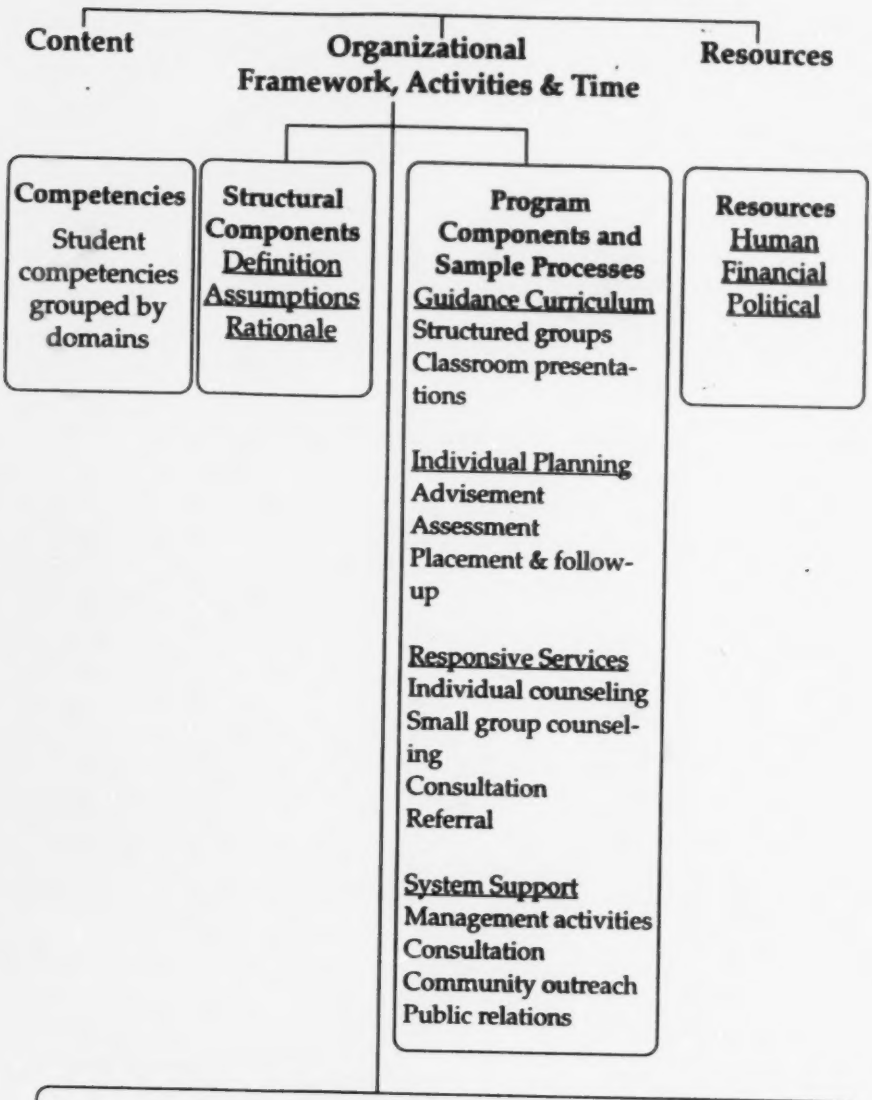
The content element of the model identifies student competencies considered important by the school district for students to master as a result of their participation in the district's comprehensive guidance program. The competencies are often organized around areas or domains such as career, educational, and personal-social. They are grouped in various ways, including by specific grades or grade-level groupings.

Organizational Framework

The organizational framework element of the model contains structural components and program components. The structural components define the program, provide a rationale for it, and list basic assumptions that undergird the program. The program components identify the four parts of the delivery system that organize the program's guidance activities and interventions. The program components are guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and system support.

The curriculum component was chosen because a curriculum provides a vehicle with which to impart guidance content to all students in a systematic way. Individual planning was included as part of the model because of the increasing need for all students to systematically plan, monitor, and manage their development and to consider and take action on their next steps personally, educationally, and occupationally. The responsive services component was included because of the need to respond to the direct, immediate concerns of students, whether these

Comprehensive Guidance Program Elements



Suggested Distribution of Total Counselor Time

	Percentage Rate		
	Elementary School	Middle/Junior High School	High School
Guidance Curriculum	35–45	25–35	15–25
Individual Planning	5–10	15–25	25–35
Responsive Services	30–40	30–40	25–35
System Support	10–15	10–15	15–20
	100	100	100

concerns involve crisis counseling, referral, or consultation with parents, teachers, or other specialists. Finally, the system support component was included because if the other guidance processes are to be effective, a variety of support activities, such as staff development, research, and curriculum development, are required. Also, system support encompasses the need for the guidance programs to provide appropriate support to other programs in a school, including school counselors assuming "fair share" tasks that all faculty may do from time to time in operating the school.

These components serve as organizers for the many guidance methods, techniques, and resources required in a comprehensive guidance program. A program is not comprehensive unless school counselors are providing activities to students, parents, and staff in all four program components.

School counselors' professional time is a critical element in the model. How should they spend their time? How should their time be spread across all four components of the total program? In this model, the four program components provide the structure for making judgments about appropriate allocations of school counselors' time. One criterion to be used in making such judgments is the concept of program balance. The assumption is that school counselors' time should be spread across all program components, but particularly the first three. The rule of 80-20 is used. Eighty percent of school counselors' time should be spread across the first three components, the direct service to students components of the program. The remaining 20% is devoted to the indirect component of the program, system support.

Another criterion is the differing needs of grade levels: Different grade levels require different allocations of counselor time across the program components. For example, at the elementary level, more school counselor time is spent working in the curriculum with less time spent in the individual planning. In a high school, these time allocations are reversed.

How school counselors in a school plan and allocate their time depends on the needs of their students and their community. Once chosen, time allocations are not fixed forever. The purpose for making them is to provide direction to the program and to the administrators and school counselors involved.

Since the comprehensive guidance program model is a "100% program," 100% of school counselors' time must be spread across the four program components. Time allocations are

changed as new needs arise, but nothing new can be added unless something else is removed. The assumption is that school counselors spend 100% of their time on task, implementing the guidance program.

Resources

Human resources for the guidance program include school counselors, teachers, administrators, parents, students, community members, and business and labor personnel. All have roles to play in the guidance program. Although the counselors are the main providers of guidance and counseling services and are the coordinators of the program, the involvement, cooperation, and support of teachers and administrators are critical for the program to be successful. The involvement, cooperation, and support of parents, community members, and business and labor personnel are also critical. A school-community advisory committee is recommended for the guidance program to bring together the talent and energy of school and community personnel.

Adequate financial resources are required if a comprehensive guidance program is to be successful. Examples of financial resources include materials, equipment, and facilities. The model highlights the need for these resources through its focus on the physical space and equipment required to conduct a comprehensive program in a school district. To make the guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and system support components function effectively, adequate guidance facilities are required.

The mobilization of the political resources in a school district is also key to a successful guidance program. Full endorsement of the guidance program by the board of education of the school district as a "program of studies of the district" is one example of mobilizing political resources. Another example is the adoption of a clear and concise school district policy that highlights the integral and central nature of the district-wide comprehensive guidance program to the overall educational program of the district.

The Power of a Common Language for the Structure of Guidance Programs

To be effective, guidance programs require consistency and logical coherence in their organizational structures and continuity

in their functioning without interruption throughout grades K–12. The model just presented was designed with the meanings of these words (consistency, logical coherence, and continuity) in mind. With this model, a common language for guidance is established in a school district that is marked by the orderly and logical relation of the three elements of a comprehensive guidance program, which afford easy comprehension and recognition by laypersons and professionals alike.

Why is a common language important for the structure of guidance programs now and further into the twenty-first century? A common language for the structure of guidance programs enables school counselors, administrators, teachers, and parents to "coordinate their work and multiply the power of their intellects" (American College Testing Program [ACT], 1998, p. 9). In addition, a common language for the structure of guidance programs allows these "individuals to communicate and replicate" (ACT, 1998, p. 9) guidance program activities. Finally, a common language for the structure of guidance programs provides the basis for program, personnel, and results evaluation across a school district and grades K–12.

Does the use of a common language for the structure of guidance programs mean that all school counselors in the district must carry out the same tasks, in the same way, for the entire school year? The answer is no. School buildings and grade levels in districts differ in their needs. School counselors' expertise differs. Thus, while the common language of the structure of the guidance program is a constant, school counselors' time allocations, the tasks they do, and the activities and interventions they use within the program structure to work with students, parents, and teachers may vary by school building and grade level. Differentiated staffing using the professional expertise of the personnel involved often is a necessity (Henderson & Gysbers, 1998).

Staying the Course

Once a common language for the structure of a school guidance program has been adopted, the task of putting it into place in a school district begins. In fact, preliminary work on preparing the district and the personnel involved should have occurred prior to the adoption of a program structure. The specifics of the process of putting a guidance program into place so that it can function fully have been described in detail

elsewhere (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000), so the specifics of this process will not be repeated here. It is important to know and remember, however, that the process takes time to take hold. We are excited about doing something for the first time. Unfortunately, we are less excited about follow-through—staying the course. But follow-through is obligatory if we are to obtain the student results we expect.

Staying the course in the change from position to program requires perseverance. Why perseverance? Because definitions of perseverance include such words and phrases as "steadfastness," "remaining constant in the face of obstacles or discouragement," "having continuing strength or patience in dealing with difficulty," and "adherence to a goal in face of opposition." Why perseverance? Because to accomplish the transition from position to program requires time. Why steadfastness? Because those who want to change must overcome the inertia of others and the resistance of those who want to maintain the status quo.

Staying the course with a common-language guidance-program structure to make sure that it is fully implemented and functioning the way it should is important, too, because it takes time for guidance programs to show student results. Although some student results may appear early, most occur only after the program has been fully operational for a period of time. This is best illustrated by the results of two studies, one from Missouri and one from Utah. Missouri has been involved in a statewide implementation since 1984; Utah began the statewide implementation process in 1989. In the Missouri study, Lapan, Gysbers, and Sun (1997) found that students in schools with more fully implemented guidance programs were more likely to report that they had earned higher grades, their education was better preparing them for their future, their school made more career and college information available to them, and their school had a more positive climate. In Utah, Nelson and Gardner (1998) found that students in schools with more fully implemented guidance programs rated their overall education as better, took more advanced mathematics and science courses, and had higher scores on every area of the ACT.

The Year 2021

Should guidance programs look the same in the year 2021 as they do today? Can a guidance program design from the late

twentieth century be responsive to the needs of students, parents, teachers, and the community in 2021? Will needs then be the same needs we see today, or will they be different?

My crystal ball says that the same organizational structure for guidance that works today will work in 2021. I am also certain, however, that some of the guidance activities and procedures that are used today may change, given new individual and societal challenges in the year 2021 and beyond. Professional time allocations will probably change, too. Thus, although the basic organizational structure for guidance will remain, activities, tasks, and time within the organizational structure are flexible, allowing adaptation to change. Staying the course with the basic organizational structure described in this chapter will provide the consistency, continuity, and common language to allow us finally to show the student results we have anticipated for so long in our literature and are beginning to see now as described in the studies from Missouri and Utah.

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Norman C. Gysbers is a professor in the Department of Educational and Counseling Psychology at the University of Missouri–Columbia. He received his M.A. (1959) and Ph.D. (1963) degrees from the University of Michigan. Gysbers' research and teaching interests are in career development; career counseling; and school guidance and counseling program development, management, and evaluation. He is author of 59 articles in 17 different professional journals, 25 chapters in published books, 14 monographs, and 13 books, including *Career Counseling: Process, Issues, and Techniques,* 1998 (with Mary Heppner and Joseph Johnston); *Leading and Managing Your School Guidance Program Staff,* 1998 (with Patricia Henderson); and *Developing and Managing Your School Guidance Program* (3rd. ed.), 2000 (with Patricia Henderson). In 1981 he was awarded the National Vocational Guidance Association National Merit Award and in 1983 the American Counseling Association Distinguished Professional Service Award. In 1989 he received the National Career Development Association Eminent Career Award and in 2000 he received the National Career Development Association Presidents Recognition Award. Currently Gysbers is the editor of the *Journal of Career Development.*